

10/730,136
NEG-325US (KATO.032)

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-26, and 28-51 are all of the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 3, 27, 52 and 53 are canceled. Entry of this amendment is proper under 37 CFR § 1.116, since the only substantive claim amendments incorporate dependent claims 3 and 27, indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent format, into their respective parent claims and the cancellation of rejected claims 52 and 53.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claims 2, 4, 6, 9-12, 14, 16-24, 27, 28, 30, 33-36, 38, and 40-50 would be allowable if rewritten in proper independent format. Although Applicant continues to believe that the present invention, as defined by all claims including those presently rejected and when properly understood, is clearly patentable over the prior art of record, Applicant has decided to expedite prosecution by placing claims indicated as allowable into condition for immediate allowance by incorporating the content of claims 3 and 27 into their respective parent claims and cancelling rejected claims 52 and 53. Therefore, all remaining claims are now allowable.

It is noted that Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 13, 15, 25, 26, 29, 31, 32, 37, 39, and 51-53 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over US Patent Publication No. 2002/0122504 to Payne et al., further in view of US Patent Publication No. 2001/0010709 to Iwamatsu et al.

The incorporation of dependent claims 2 and 27 and the cancellation of independent claims 52 and 53 renders this rejection moot.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-53, all the claims presently

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pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

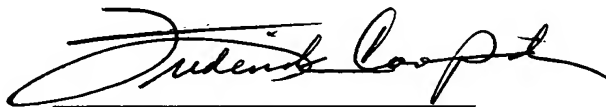
Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date:

12/07/09



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